

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-25 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 AID-20 ACDA-19 NIC-01 DRC-01

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R 270832Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5485

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PK, BG, IN

SUBJ: BHUTTO AND PARTY DEPART FOR BANGLADESH

REF: ISLAMAOHD 6016

SUMMARY: BHUTTO LEFT ISLAMABAD JUNE 27 FOR THREE-DAY VISIT TO DACCA, ACCOMPANIED BY NUMBER OF HIGH OFFICIALS AND CENTRAL AND PROVINCIAL LEGISLATORS. DEPARTURE FOLLOWED DAY OF UPS AND DOWNS, BEGINNING WITH GOVERNMENT-INSPIRED HEADLINE PRESS ARTICLES CHARGING THAT BANGLADESH HAD STEPPED UP ANTI-PAK PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT OF BHUTTO VISIT AND THAT VISIT MIGHT HAVE TO BE CANCELLED AS CONSEQUENCE. ARTICLES POINTED TO INDIA AS PROBABLE DEMON BEHIND CAMPAIGN. UNCERTAINTY DISPELLED BY LATER GOP ANNOUNCEMENT THAT BDG HAD TAKEN ACTION TO TONE DOWN OFFENDING BROADCASTS, PERMITTING VISIT TO PROCEED. NOT CLEAR WHETHER THIS INCIDENT RESULTED FROM ACTUAL UPSURGE

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IN BANGLADESH ANTI-PAK PROPAGANDA OR WHETHER IT MAY

HAVE BEEN CONTRIVED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY GOP AS
TACTICAL MANEUVER. END SUMMARY.

1. BHUTTO AND PARTY ON ABOUT 100 DEPARTED ISLAMABAD
MORNING JULY 27 FOR DACCA TO BEGIN THREE-DAY OFFICIAL
VISIT. ACCOMPANYING PRIMIN ARE MINSTATE FOR DEFENSE
AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS AZIZ AHMED, COMMERCE SECRETARY
EJAZ NAIK, FOREIGN SECRETARY AGHA SHAHI, SPECIAL
ASSISTANT YUSUF BUCH, PIA MANAGING DIRECTOR NUR KHAN,
KARACHI NEWSPAPER OWNER MAHMOOD HAROON, DEPUTY
SPEAKER OF SENATE TAHIR MOHAMMED KHAN, PLUS ABOUT 16 OTHER
SENATORS, MNAS AND MPAS.

2. JUST A DAY EARLIER, IT APPEARED VISIT MIGHT BE
CANCELLED AS RESULT FLARE-UP OVER ALLEGED ANTI-
PAKISTAN PROPAGANDA BY RADIO BANGLADESH. GOVERNMENT-
CONTROLLED PAK PRESS ON JUNE 26 HEADLINED ASSOCIATED PRESS
PAKISTAN REPORT ATTRIBUTED TO "OFFICIAL
CIRCLES" IN ISLAMABAD THAT BANGLADESH RAIDO, EVER
SINCE ANNOUNCEMENT ON JUNE 20 OF BHUTTO VISIT, HAD
BEEN ENGAGED IN "VITUPERATIVE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN", AGAINST
PAKISTAN, REVIVING MEMORIES OF 1971 AND ATTACKING GOP, PAK
PEOPLE, ARMY AND CHIEF OF STAFF. ARTICLE CHARGED
THAT BHUTTO HAS BEEN "PERSONALLY PILLORIED" AND
THAT PAKISTAN HAD BEEN CONDEMNED FOR "TWO DECADES OF
COLONIAL AND TYRANNICAL RULE". ARTICLE COMMENTED
THAT THIS "STRANGE, ABNORMAL AND UNMANNERLY PROPAGANDA
CAMPAIGN" HAD JEOPARDIZED WHOLE PURPOSE OF BHUTTO
VISIT AND THAT "IT WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING" IF IT
HAD TO BE POSTPONED. ARTICLE ADDED ANTI-INDIAN
TOUCH BY SUGGESTING THAT CAMPAIGN HAD BEEN
INSPIRED BY INDIA IN ORDER TO HEAD OFF PAK-
BANGLADESH RECONCILIATION, SUGGESTION WHICH GOVERNMENT-
CONTROLLED PAKISTAN TIMES EXPANDED ON IN JUNE 26
EDITORIAL CALLING ON BDG TO GET OUT FROM UNDER INDIAN
THUMB. ARTICLE ALSO FLOATED SUGGESTION THAT CAMPAIGN
WAS DESIGNED TO DISCOURAGE BENGALIEE PEOPLE FROM
ACCORDING BHUTTO THE "UNPRECEDENTED WELCOME" THEY WERE
PREPARED TO EXTEND.

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3. UNCERTAINTY GENERATED BY GOP-INSPIRED PRESS OUT-
BURST WAS DISPELLED BY GOP ANNOUNCEMENT LATE AFODRNOON
JUNE 26 THAT AS RESULT ACTION TAKEN BY BDG,
OFFICIALS IN ISLAMABAD HAD DETECTED A "WELCOME CHANGE
IN CONTENT AND TONE IN RADIO BANGLADESH" SINCE JUNE 25,
ALTHOUGH IT ADDED THAT "ALL THE MEDIA IN DACCA
DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE CAUGHT UP WITH THE REVISED
OFFICIAL INSTRUCTIONS". AS RESULT OF CHANGED TONE

IN DACCA, ANNOUNCEMENT INDICATED, VISIT WOULD PROCEED.

4. COMMENT: THIS APPARENT CLIFF-HANGER DEMONSTRATES ONCE AGAIN DEPTH OF MISTRUST AND SUSPICION THAT CONTINUE TO HAMPER COURSE OF PAK-INDIA-BANGLADESH RECONCILIATION. NOT CLEAR TO US HERE WHETHER THERE ACTUALLY WAS POST-JUNE 20 UPSURGE IN RADIO BANGLADESH ANTI-PAK PROPAGANDA THAT UPSET GOP OR WHETHER PAKS MAY HAVE CONTRIVED THIS INCIDENT TO SOME EXTENT IN ORDER EITHER TO FORCE BENGALIS TO MODERATE TONE OF THEIR NORMAL PROPAGANDA OUTPUT OR TO GAIN TACTICAL ADVANTAGE OVER BDG DURING BHUTTO-MUJIB TALKS BY HAVING GRIEVANCE TO CITE.

5. WITH REGARD COMPOSITION OF BHUTTO ENTOURAGE, INCLUSION OF COMMERCE SECRETARY AND PIA HEAD SUGGESTS TRADE AND PERHAPS RESTORATION OF AIR LINKS IN SOME FORM MAY BE ON AGENDA FOR TALKS. INCLUSION OF MAHMOOD HAROON, OWNER OF KARACHI DAWN, MAY CONFIRM RECURRING RUMOR THAT HE HAS BEEN TIPPED FOR FIRST PAK AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH. INCLUSION OF SENATORS AND MEMBERS CENTRAL AND PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES ON FOREIGN TRIPS USUALLY REFLECTS BHUTTO'S PAYOFFS FOR FAVORS RECEIVED AND EXPECTED. IN THIS CASE, ADDITIONAL MOTIVE MAY BE DESIRE TO ENHANCE CEREMONIAL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECT OF VISIT. WE UNDERSTAND MOST OPPOSITION LEADERS HAVE REFUSED TO PARTICIPATE IN VISIT EXCEPT FOR INDEPENDENT (FORMER COUNCIL MUSLIM LEAGUE) SHAUKAT HYAT, WHO HAS ALWAYS STOOD APART FROM MOST OTHER OPPOSITION FIGURES IN SUPPORTING BHUTTO'S POLICY OF SUBCONTINENTAL ACCOMMODATION.
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